

## Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (for the 2024 to 2025 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

### School overview

Detail	Data
School name	The Ladder School
Number of students in school	TLS- 58 TLS+ -25 TLS Connect – 24 November 2024 <i>This fluctuates as we are an Alternative Provision school</i>
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students	TLS-34/58 TLS+-14/25 TLS Connect-17/24 Total- 61% November 2024 <i>This fluctuates as we are an Alternative Provision school</i>
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024 – 2025
Date this statement was published	November 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Richard Gifford, Assistant Principal
Pupil premium lead	Keziah Featherstone, Executive Headteacher
Governor / trustee lead	Nick Dean

### Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£2,500
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b>	<b>£2,500</b>

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

Our aim is to use Pupil Premium funding to help us achieve and sustain positive outcomes for our students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Pupil Premium funding that The Ladder School receives is not reflective of the funding that the students are entitled to as funding goes to the students' mainstream school. Each school uses its Pupil Premium funding to contribute towards the funding of the placement. Pupil Premium income received is not reflective of the numbers of disadvantaged students in school.

Most students joining The Ladder School come from a background of social and economic deprivation. Whilst we acknowledge that this is not always the primary challenge our students face, it is evident that their outcomes for academic attainment, social mobility, progression to FE and HE and employability are less positive than their peers both within TLS (and those who join us at similar starting points) and their placing schools. We focus our high-quality teaching on areas that disadvantaged students require most, targeted support based on robust diagnostic assessment of need, and helping students to access a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes our transition process and assessment on and after entry.

Although our strategy is focused on the needs of disadvantaged students, it will benefit all students in our school where funding is spent on whole-school approaches, such as high-quality support within the classroom. While we strive to offer all students the same opportunities, we make targeted efforts to support pupil premium students where appropriate. This includes interventions focused on improving attendance and providing additional resources. In such cases, we proactively contact parents to inform them about the available resources for their child. Our intention is that the outcomes for non-disadvantaged students will also be improved as a result of this strategy.

Our strategy is personalised to the needs and strengths of each young person, based on formal and informal assessments and a detailed knowledge of their background and the challenges that they face both in and out of school. This will help us to ensure that we offer them the relevant skills, qualifications and experience they require to be prepared for adulthood.

We will also provide disadvantaged students with support to develop independent life and social skills and continue to ensure that high-quality work experience, careers guidance and further and higher education guidance is available to all.

## Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged students.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Most students arrive at the school with large gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Few are working at the standards expected for their age. Students are screened and tested on entry to identify starting points and any additional needs to ensure effective support is put in place at the earliest opportunity. Most students have a reading age below their chronological age and have language comprehension difficulties, requiring additional literacy support. Poor attendance from their previous schools is a key factor.
2	Many students have had a difficult journey in their secondary school(s) and have become disengaged with learning and do not trust adults.
3	Transition meetings and initial assessments show that students arrive viewing education as a negative experience and as a result, many have low self-esteem and expectation of themselves and the school. A higher than average percentage have a history of safeguarding and child protection issues.
4	Our assessments, observations and discussions with students show that disadvantaged students generally have greater challenges around communicating and expressing their needs than their peers, including non-verbal, limited language and social interaction difficulties.
5	Our assessments, observations and conversations with students indicate that disadvantaged students often require additional support to develop personal skills, e.g. personal hygiene, healthy eating
6	Through observations and conversations with students and their families, we find that disadvantaged students generally have fewer opportunities to develop cultural capital outside of school.

## Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved attainment for disadvantaged students in all subjects, particularly Maths, English and Science relative to their starting points as identified through baseline assessments	Improved performance of disadvantage students and a reduction in the attainment gap between these students and their peers, as demonstrated by our end of year assessments and GCSE results.
Improve reading age, fluency and language comprehension for disadvantaged students.	Assessment of students' reading age and language comprehension shows an improvement from entry to their GCSE results.
Attendance - improve attendance to enable students to improve attainment and engagement	Improved attendance to national average for similar schools and from previous school.
Disadvantaged students feel better prepared for career progression and / or opportunities through mentoring, work experience and opportunity.	All disadvantaged students are able to access high quality work experience and careers mentoring. End of year reviews show that disadvantaged students are progressing to higher or further education or an apprenticeship at the end of KS4/KS5 in the same numbers as their peers.

## Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

## Quality First Teaching

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Subjects to include a range of activities to support disadvantaged students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning for individual student's needs to address gaps in knowledge and misconceptions. Ensuring the necessary components of foundational knowledge are in place so that students access more complex knowledge/concepts as they progress.</li> <li>Use of Meta Cognition and oracy to enable students to increase attainment. Various such techniques were introduced last year which will be embedded this year.</li> <li>Teachers provide careful explanations and modelling by interacting with students through effective questioning</li> <li>Students are provided with meaningful activities to support them in knowing, understanding and remembering more in the long-term.</li> <li>Teachers check understanding regularly in lessons and adapt teaching where necessary.</li> </ul> <p>Subjects bid for resources such as workbooks and guides. Although all students receive them as per our strategy, we proactively contact parents to inform them about such resources for their child.</p>	<p>To ensure Quality First Teaching across the school</p> <p><a href="https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf">Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</a></p> <p>Avery, C (1990) Teacher Action Research: Building Knowledge Democracies, Sage Publications</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/teaching-learning-toolkit/">Teaching and Learning Toolkit   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p>The potential impact of metacognition is high (7+ months) EEF  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-andself-regulation">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-andself-regulation</a>          'There is evidence to suggest that feedback involving metacognitive and self-regulatory approaches may have a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils and lower prior attainers than other pupils.' EEF</p>	1, 2 3
<p>CPD opportunities :</p> <p>Appropriately planned CPD for staff to develop their expertise in planning, teaching, learning and assessment.</p> <p>This is not only from TLS and Trust wide opportunities but also individual CPD based on specific individual needs.</p>	<p>By delivering an effective CPD strategy affords all staff the opportunity to improve their pedagogy. This will lead to an improvement in student outcomes,</p>	1,2

## Targeted academic support

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Improved Literacy standard, Literacy interventions across school for low attaining disadvantaged pupils – Read, Write, Inc, effective use of Reading Policy which is fully embedded in pedagogy. This is to help our students acquire and understand both tier 2 and 3 vocabularies.</p> <p>Reading Intervention packages</p> <p>This also includes financial literacy</p>	<p>To improve reading age of pupils (focussing on pupils with a reading age of less than 12), comprehension skills and oracy</p> <p>Wasik and Slavin (1993) Assess reading every term to evaluate reading</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/reading-comprehension-strategies/">Reading comprehension strategies   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p>Not only is reading a vital life skill but evidence suggests that students who have reading ages equivalent to their chronological age are more likely to perform better at GCSE exams.</p> <p>‘Literacy skills are essential in helping young people unlock their financial resilience.’ National Literacy Trust</p>	1,2, 3
<p>Key working Sessions to aid with resilience and attainment/behaviour in all subjects.</p>	<p>Targeted academic support can support pupil progress and can be employed to help boost language development, literacy, or numeracy as well as other subject areas. Interventions should be carefully linked to classroom teaching and matched to individual pupils’ specific needs, while not inhibiting their access to the wider curriculum.</p>	1,2,3,4,5

## Wider strategies

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Literacy interventions across TLS for low attaining disadvantaged pupils – Read, Write, Inc, effective use of literacy strategy	To improve reading age of pupils (focussing on pupils with a reading age of less than 12), comprehension skills and oracy Wasik and Slavin (1993)	1, 3, 5
Careers: Range of speakers from varied possible career paths to inspire student and improve their cultural capital.	<a href="https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance/">https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance/</a>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Attendance: Various strategies are implemented; <i>parents/carers called when student is not present</i> , rewards for attendance, barriers to attendance addressed in key work sessions, PP students are the first to be called when absent so targeted.	Attendance interventions rapid evidence assessment   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1
Gaps in learning due to missed educations, negative attitude to learning, low self-esteem, SEMH challenges	One to one support in and out of the classroom Blatchford, Russell, Bassett, Brown and Martin (2004)	1, 2, 3,4,5
A range of resource for staff to aid with their teaching such as memory techniques and resilience	<a href="https://rteworcester.wp.worc.ac.uk/index.php/2022/01/10/buildinghttps://rteworcester.wp.worc.ac.uk/index.php/2022/01/10/building-student-resilience/studentresilience/#:~:text=Resilience%20enables%20students%20to%20cope,and%20mind%20set%20for%20success.">https://rteworcester.wp.worc.ac.uk/index.php/2022/01/10/buildinghttps://rteworcester.wp.worc.ac.uk/index.php/2022/01/10/building-student-resilience/studentresilience/#:~:text=Resilience%20enables%20students%20to%20cope,and%20mind%20set%20for%20success.</a>	1,2
Enrichment: Various activities such as trips to the theatre, this also helps improve cultural capital	<a href="https://www.hereforschools.co.uk/Page/14432">https://www.hereforschools.co.uk/Page/14432</a>	5
Rewards to aid in motivation for students to stay in class.	<a href="https://improvingteaching.co.uk/2019/05/19/rewarding-students-should-we-if-so-how/">https://improvingteaching.co.uk/2019/05/19/rewarding-students-should-we-if-so-how/</a>	
Parental/Carer Engagement: Various activities to improve parental/carers engagement such as coffee morning/ afternoons and up to date curriculum information communicated to parents/carers	<a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationhttps://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagementevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationhttps://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagementevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement</a>	1,2,3,4,5

**Total budgeted cost: £ 2,500**

## **Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year**

### **Pupil premium strategy outcomes**

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on students in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

#### **Attainment**

English Language average target grade: 3.1

English Language result: 2.5

English Literature average target: 3.1

English Literature result: 2.3

Maths average target grade: 3.1

Maths average result: 2.1

Science average target: 3-3

Science average result: 2-2

18% of PP students achieved their target grade in both English Language and Maths.

- Students joining will have inevitably have many gaps in their knowledge and understanding, unfortunately not all gaps were filled. As a result some students were not able to achieve their target grade.

#### **Attendance**

Year 9 – 6 PP students – 4/6 had better attendance than their previous school. 1 had 100% attendance

Year 10 - 5 PP students 4/6 had better attendance 1 had over 90%

Year 11 – 11 PP students 7/11 had better attendance than their previous school.

#### **Student Engagement**

Student engagement remains a core strength that is now embedded in our teaching pedagogy. This has been evidenced through various methods, quality assurance and learning walks. Feedback from students also indicates strong engagement, with the vast majority finding the lessons captivating. These findings demonstrate an increase in student participation during class activities, which contributes to their overall academic progress. When students exhibit high levels of behavioural and emotional engagement, they are not only more likely to succeed academically but also experience an enhanced sense of social-emotional well-being.

#### **Metacognition and Oracy**



The benefits of developing metacognitive skills are significant. Students with these skills can recognize their cognitive strengths, direct their own learning, evaluate their performance, understand the factors behind their successes or failures, and adopt new strategies. This also aids them in mastering revision techniques.

Research indicates that progress in reading is accelerated through high-quality oracy education. A meta-analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021) found that oral language interventions positively impact attainment, particularly in reading.

Vocabulary is fundamental to the reading process, influencing both word recognition and language comprehension and furthermore enabling students to fully access the curriculum with acquisition of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary. As Isabelle Beck and her colleagues discuss in *Bringing Words to Life* (2002), oral language is the most effective medium for learning new words. In oracy-rich classrooms, students have structured opportunities to experiment with new vocabulary in their speech and to hear language used in context, which significantly benefits their reading. Consequently, a strong oracy education boosts students' academic performance and social-emotional confidence. When asked why speaking and listening (oracy) is important to them, 35% of students in Voice 21 Oracy Schools cited oracy as a source of confidence.

Oracy education is especially crucial during transitional periods when students adapt to new social environments and academic challenges. By preparing our students for the wider world, we empower them to navigate these changes with confidence.

This year, we are committed to embedding these practices throughout our curriculum. Several techniques have been introduced to staff to form part of their pedagogy to enhance our students' oracy and metacognitive skills, which are essential for self-regulation. The benefits of developing metacognitive skills are significant. Students with these skills can recognise their cognitive strengths, direct their own learning, evaluate their performance, understand the factors behind their successes or failures, and adopt new strategies. This also aids them in mastering revision techniques.

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